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LUTHERANS, EPISCOPALIANS SHARE RITE CELEBRATING ECUMENICAL ACCORD

DPS 83016

WASHINGTON (DPS, Jan. 20) -- Episcopalians and Lutherans -- nearly 2,500 strong -- were led in worship by the Episcopal Church presiding bishop and the president bishops of three Lutheran denominations Jan. 16 in a service celebrating a radical new step in ecumenical relations.

Presiding Bishop John M. Allin and Washington Episcopal diocesan Bishop John T. Walker were joined at the high altar of the National Cathedral by Bishop James R. Crumley of the Lutheral Church in America, Bishop David Preus of the American Lutheran Church and Bishop William Kohn of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches for a shared celebration of the Eucharist that would have been impossible before September of last year.

Although far from the first such celebration, the Washington service marked the first time that the heads of the four Church bodies stood together at the altar and thus symbolized the full range and implication of the Interim Sharing agreement that passed the governing bodies of the four last September.

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Preceded by a congregation that included clergy, choirs and lay leaders of all the participating churches drawn from area parishes, the four Church leaders processed into the cathedral to each take a significant role in the service: Kohn was gospellor; Crumley preached; Preus led the Prayers of the People and Allin was chief celebrant at the Eucharist.

Rite II from the Book of Common Prayer was used for the liturgy with sung portions according to music from the Lutheran Book of Worship. The Scripture readings were drawn from the common lectionary shared by the four and the first two were read by Mrs. Thomas Baerwald, general secretary of the American Lutheran Church and by Dr. Charles R. Lawrence, president of the House of Deputies of the Episcopal General Convention. Hymns and anthems were drawn from both traditions.

In his sermon, Crumley likened the Interim Sharing agreement to a "plunge into some icy waters" and added that he is convinced "we will find it refreshing and life-giving."

Crumley described the Church as a "gift -- not reward, grace, or merit -- with a mission prescribed by the Lord, not an agenda constructed through our deliberations."

"To insist that the things on which we disagree are of greater significance than those on which we agree is to avoid Christ's intention for us," he continued.

Before the service, the bishops participated in a panel discussion videotaped for cable television by the communication staffs of the Washington Cathedral and the Episcopal Church Center. Charles Austin, religion staff writer for the *New York Times*, served as moderator.

During the discussion, Allin pointed out that Episcopal-Lutheran ecumenical progress has been motivated in large part by a "desire on the part of all to meet more effectively the needs of suffering human beings throughout the world."

Crumley expressed a concern for the need to have mutual recognition "of the validity of the ministers" by Episcopalians and Lutherans alike, one of the problems that has yet to be worked out before full intercommunion can be achieved.

In response to a question from Austin about Episcopalians and Lutherans who might not accept the agreement, Preus reiterated that no one should participate in a joint Episcopal-Lutheran Eucharist who cannot in good conscience do so.

The bishops expressed the hope that the Washington service would be a model for similar services in other places, particularly by Episcopal and Lutheran congregations in local communities.

Picture Caption

#83016/1 Presiding Bishop John M. Allin took part in a panel discussion and historic eucharistic celebration with the heads of three Lutheran communions Jan. 16 as the four formally inaugurated the Interim Sharing agreement achieved last September. Shown above in conversation before the service are, from left, Bishop David Preus, Bishop John M. Allin, Bishop James R. Crumley and Bishop William Kohn.

#83016/2 Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop John M. Allin, center left, and Bishop John T. Walker of Washington, center right, exchange the peace with the heads of Lutheran communions in an historic celebration of the Eucharist at which the heads of all four bodies stood together at the altar and took major roles in the service before a congregation of 2,500 in the National Cathedral Jan. 16.

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ALLIN ISSUES STATEMENT
ON NCCC/CHURCH RELATIONS

DPS 83017

NEW YORK (DPS, Jan. 20) -- Presiding Bishop John M. Allin has supported Episcopal Church membership in the National Council of Churches of Christ and also explained Episcopal financial support of the ecumenical organization in the wake of a January, 1983 article in *Reader's Digest* magazine that is critical of the National Council.

"The National Council of Churches, like all organizations, is far from perfect," said the presiding bishop, "but in my opinion, Episcopal participation continues to be worthwhile for many reasons. Though the Episcopal Church is a member communion of the National Council, neither that organization, nor its Governing Board in any way speaks for Episcopalians or dictates our priorities."

Allin noted that the *Digest* reports that \$1 million of the National Council's financial support in 1980 came from the Episcopal Church.

"While that is substantially true," he noted, "it is also misleading. The *Reader's Digest* article implies that we just handed over \$1 million for the National Council to do with as it pleased. Our people participate in decision-making roles at every level of the National Council structure and we keep close tabs on how the money is used."

Episcopal Church financial records for 1980, the year cited by the *Digest*, indicate that a total of \$1,165,805.08 was transmitted to or through the National Council or Church World Service, the National Council-related world relief organization. \$76,408 was the Episcopal Church's base support for the National Council 1980 budget. \$90,790.75 was sent to the Council from various department budgets of the Episcopal Church, usually used in jointly-sponsored programs and ministries. Most of the Episcopal Church money going to the National Council -- \$998,606.33 -- was channeled for human disasters through Church World Service which is an agency for Church bodies to work together overseas.

In most cases, the Church -- acting through its own relief agencies -- contributes to Church World Service appeals that are direct responses to disasters that have occurred somewhere in the world.

"I'm sorry that the *Reader's Digest* article was written or published," commented Allin. "It is always easy for journalists to be critical of any institution, and sometimes this is of positive value. In this case, however, I believe the picture of the National Council of Churches conveyed to *Reader's Digest* readers is an unfair one and overly negative. It does not reflect my experience regarding the National Council of Churches."

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EL SALVADOR BISHOP
REPORTS ON VISITATION

DPS 83018

NEW YORK (DPS, Jan. 20) -- Personal hatreds and the structural malaise of the country were probably behind the vicious killing of seven workers on a Church-run farm in November according to a report of the Episcopal Bishop-in-Charge.

Bishop G. Edward Haynsworth, who is also Latin American partnership officer at the Episcopal Church Center here, went back to El Salvador at the request of Presiding Bishop John M. Allin shortly after the Church learned that seven members of the La Florida cooperative farm had been murdered and their bodies mutilated. The slaughtered men left 24 orphans and their deaths threw the model farm village into disarray.

Allin, joined immediately by Archbishops Robert Runcie of Canterbury and Edward Scott of Canada, protested the killings and commended United States officials for their efforts to press for investigation.

Haynsworth went into the country in mid-January and met with the victims' families, other survivors of the farm, Episcopal clergy, the United States ambassador and the president of El Salvador.

On his return, he sent a report to the three primates and summarized his findings in a conversation with Church Center staff.

"The majority of the 64 families who had been part of the farm have had to leave for their own safety," he said. "I spoke with those closest to the victims and learned that they were most likely killed because of personal animosity that had developed against them before they came to La Florida."

Former enemies of the men were recognized as guides with the armed men who invaded the camp. Haynsworth is certain that reports -- apparently circulated to justify the murders -- that the victims were members of "subversive forces" are completely false.

"The kind of atrocity indicated by the condition of the bodies indicates that great hatred was behind the killings." The deaths, it appears, are the result of the breakdown in moral and legal restraints by all parties and private factions in the current strife.

"The encouraging part of the trip," Haysworth continued, "was an interview with Dr. Alvaro Magana, the country's president. He had heard of the incident and promised an investigation utilizing the top military people. He also offered to visit La Florida and is scheduled to do so in February."

Haynsworth also expressed satisfaction with the Church's relations with U.S. officials, including Ambassador Deane Hinton whose call for an investigation was backed by the primates.

In spite of the murders -- the third such incident in which Episcopalians have been victims in recent years -- Haynsworth found the Church to be "healthy and growing."

"I recognized a new congregation while there and received 20 new adult members," he reported. He was also able to spend time with two clergy of the diocese, the Rev. Luis Serrano, whose CREDHO organization runs the farm, and the Rev. Victoriano Jimano.

His visit also included stops at a Baptist-Episcopal children's home and a refugee camp run by Lutherans that has become a new home for many who fled La Florida.

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VIRGINIA BISHOPS ACT
AGAINST DEATH PENALTY

DPS 83019

RICHMOND, Va. (DPS, Jan. 20) -- After touring the Commonwealth's death row, the three Episcopal diocesan bishops in Virginia have called on the General Assembly meeting here to repeal an eight-year-old capital punishment law.

Bishops Robert B. Hall of Virginia, A. Heath Light of Southwestern Virginia and C. Charles Vache of Southern Virginia toured the death row of the Mecklenburg Correctional Center Jan. 12 and talked with most of the 19 inmates facing death. They then held a press conference at the State Capitol Building in which they declared that no human being has a right to take another's life.

The position is not a popular one in Virginia. No repeal bill is in the General Assembly and Vache conceded that no lawmaker appeared "ready to put his political life on the line" by introducing one.

In their prepared statement, the three declared that they sought to bear witness to "Jesus Christ, himself a victim of capital punishment, who suffered death under the laws of political, judicial and religious systems which, in seeking to protect themselves from violence, used violence to enforce their political or religious dogmas."

They pointed to the consistent and long-standing opposition of Episcopal Church synods to capital punishment and ended with a call to the governor and legislators "to enact legislation which eliminates capital punishment and also seeks to promote redemptive justice through a rehabilitative penal system which enhances the sacredness of all human life and thus embraces the best precepts of our common Judeo-Christian and humanitarian traditions."

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'MAGEE' ANDERSEN TO RETIRE
FROM CHURCH CENTER STAFF

DPS 83020

NEW YORK (DPS, Jan. 20) -- Mrs. Robert P. Andersen will retire as associate communication officer at the Episcopal Church Center at the end of May, it was announced recently.

'Magee', as she is widely known throughout the Church, began work at the Center in 1963 as associate secretary for radio, television and audio-visual material after a career in those fields with Hearst Radio, the Columbia Broadcasting System and in production work with motion picture companies in Southern California.

Since joining the Church Center staff, she has traveled widely throughout the Episcopal Church as a liaison to numerous dioceses and as a communication consultant. She has worked closely with Venture in Mission, Coalition-14 dioceses and many of the presentations at General Convention. Her staff responsibilities have included supervision of all printing of program materials done at the Center and acting as budget officer for the communication staff.

She is a trustee of Cathedral Films and was a Fellow in communication at the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest. The Andersens plan to remain in New York City where Magee will continue her communication consultation work.

It is expected that the communication office of the Center will be restructured to accommodate future needs and responsibilities.

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